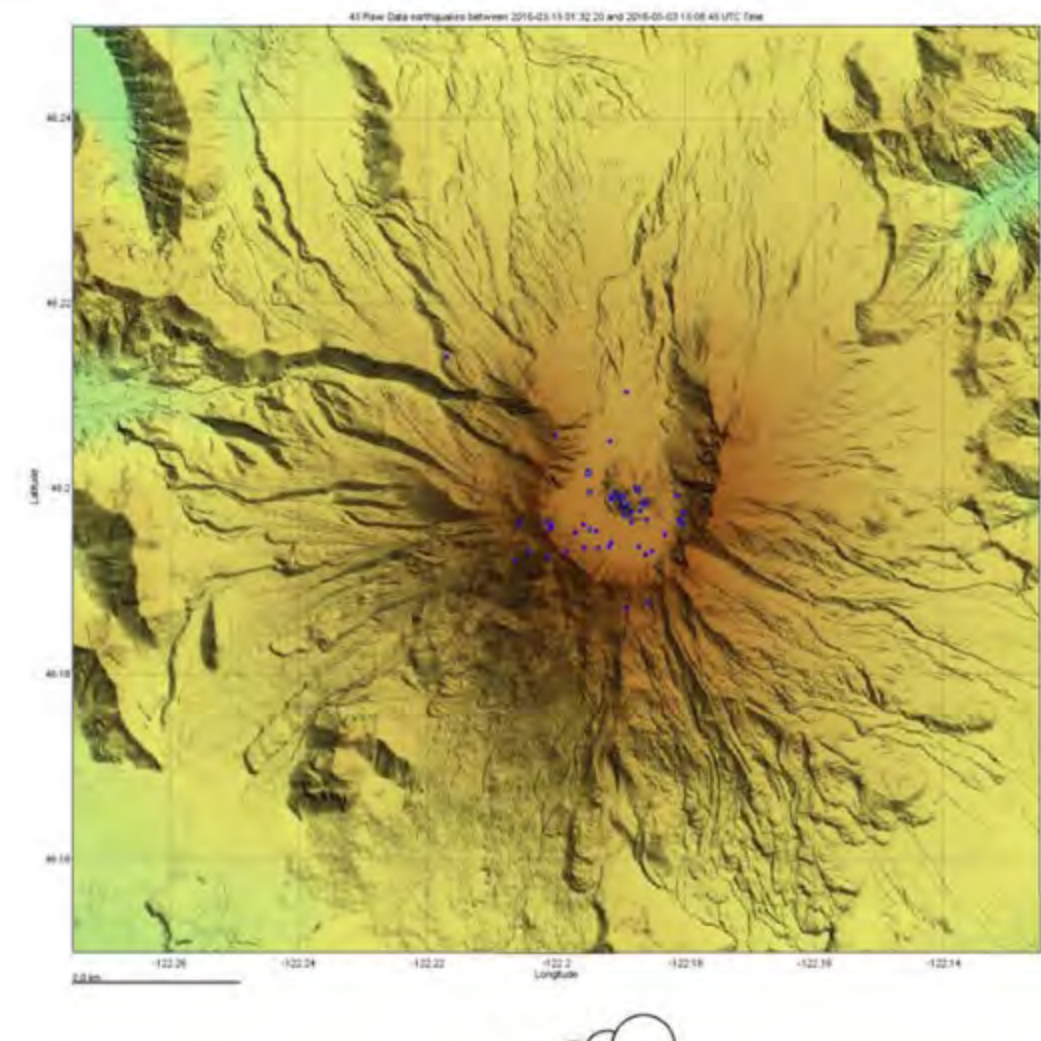


Live Science > Planet Earth

More than 100 Tiny Temblors Shake Mount St. Helens

By Laura Geggel, Senior Writer | May 7, 2016 07:35am ET

Facebook 527
Twitter 47
Google+ 8
Pinterest 35
StumbleUpon 4
MORE



This map plots the detectable earthquakes detected on Mount St. Helens from March 14, 2016 to May 4, 2016.

Credit: Wes Thelen | USGS

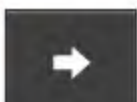
Tiny temblors are shaking Mount St. Helens, indicating that the magma beneath the volcano is on the move, the U.S. Geological Survey (USGS) reports.

These mini earthquakes, along with the fact that the ground around the volcano is moving ever so slightly away from it, suggest that [Mount St. Helens](#) will one day erupt again, said Seth Moran, the scientist in charge at the USGS Cascades Volcano Observatory in Vancouver, Washington.

However, this upcoming eruption is likely "years to decades down the road," Moran told Live Science.

Solar Inverter From China

1.5-500KW>Your Manufacturer Partner Globe Certificates, Photon Test AA



Mount St. Helens, located in the Cascade Mountain range in southern Washington, is known for its enormous eruption on May 18, 1980. The eruption, which was preceded by more than 10,000 earthquakes, killed 57 people, [according to USGS](#). [\[In Photos: The Incredible 1980 Eruption of Mount St. Helens\]](#)



Mount St. Helens, located in southern Washington, is experiencing some low-magnitude tremblers.

Credit: Victoria Dilkovsky Shutterstock.com

These earthquakes started small, but grew into the 4-magnitude range as the volcano neared its eruption, finally reaching a magnitude 5.1 [the morning of May 18](#), USGS reported.

"What we're looking at [now] is way smaller," Moran said.

Mount St. Helens had a much smaller eruption lasting from 2004 to 2008, [USGS said](#).

The latest earthquakes — most registering a magnitude of 0.5 or less, with the largest reaching a magnitude 1.3 — started March 14, 2016, at a depth between 1.2 miles and 4 miles (2 and 7 kilometers), [USGS said](#).

During the past eight weeks, researchers have recorded more than 130 of these tiny earthquakes. The rate of the temblors has been increasing since March, reaching almost 40 earthquakes a week, the USGS said.

Moreover, global positioning system (GPS) instruments placed around the volcano show a slight ground movement. Over the past eight years, the ground has moved between 0.4 inches to 0.8 inches (1 to 2 centimeters) away from the volcano, Moran said.

Both of these signs — the earthquakes and the movement — are volcano-tectonic in nature, the USGS said. These signs are probably happening because of [a slip on a small fault](#), the agency said.

"Such events are commonly seen in active hydrothermal and magmatic systems," the USGS said. "The magma chamber is likely imparting its own stresses on the crust around and above it, as the system slowly recharges. The stress drives fluids through cracks, producing the small quakes."

Similar events happened in 2013 and 2014, and in the 1990s a swarm of earthquakes were even more frequent and released more energy, USGS said.

However, the USGS hasn't detected any anomalous gases coming from the volcano, which would suggest magma is pushing up toward the surface. "As was observed at Mount St. Helens between 1987 [and] 2004, recharge can continue for many years beneath a [volcano without an eruption](#)," USGS said.

What's more, Mount St. Helens is hardly the only active volcano in the United States. For instance, the [Pavlof volcano in Alaska](#) spewed ash 20,000 feet (6,000 meters) into the air in late March, and Hawaii's Kilauea volcano has been continuously erupting since 1983, Moran said.

Follow Laura Geggel on Twitter [@LauraGeggel](#). Follow Live Science [@livescience](#), [Facebook](#) & [Google+](#). Original article on [Live Science](#).

Editor's Recommendations

- [Wow! Wild Volcanoes in Pictures](#)
- [Gallery: Iceland's Booming Bardarbunga Volcano \(Photos\)](#)
- [Big Blasts: History's 10 Most Destructive Volcanoes](#)

Did Jesus Claim He's God?

Was Jesus Just a Moral Leader Or Did He Actually Claim to Be God?



More from Live Science



'Boaty McBoatface' Vessel Named for David Attenborough



Where Is the Most Lightning-Prone Place in the World?



States of Matter: Bose-Einstein Condensate



There Might Be 1 Trillion Species on Earth



100-Foot Image of Mythical Creature Discovered in Peru



Oldest Crystals on Earth Originated in Asteroid Craters



States of Matter: Plasma



Stunning Cloud Maps Tell the Story of Life on Earth

Author Bio



Laura Geggel, Senior Writer

As a staff writer for Live Science, Laura Geggel covers general science, including the environment and amazing animals. She has written for the Simons Foundation, Scholastic, Popular Science and The New York Times. Laura grew up in Seattle and studied English literature and psychology at Washington University in St. Louis before completing her graduate degree in science writing at NYU. When not writing, you'll find Laura playing Ultimate Frisbee. Follow Laura on [Google+](#).

0 Comments

Sort by Newest



Add a comment...

Facebook Comments Plugin

COMPANY

Company Info

About Us

Contact Us

Advertise with Us

Using Our Content

Licensing & Reprints

Terms of Use and Sale

Copyright Policy

Privacy Policy

NETWORK

Top Ten Reviews

Tom's Guide

Laptop Mag

Tom's Hardware

Business News Daily

Tom's IT Pro

Space.com

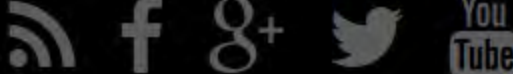
Live Science

Active Junky

ShopSavvy

AnandTech

FOLLOW US



SUBSCRIBE

enter email here SUBMIT

Purch

Copyright © 2016 All Rights Reserved.